

William Egan Colby

Mr. William E. Colby was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1920. The son of an Army officer, his early life was spent in various posts, including a three-year period in Tientsin, China.

In 1940 he was graduated from Princeton University and in 1941 joined the United States Army, serving in the Parachute Field Artillery. When the Office of Strategic Services put out a call for French speakers in 1943, Mr. Colby volunteered and in 1944 was parachuted behind enemy lines in north central France to work with a resistance unit. Shortly before the end of the war in 1945, he led a team dropped in northern Norway to destroy a rail line used for transporting German reinforcements.

Following the war, Mr. Colby obtained his law degree from Columbia Law School and joined a New York law firm headed by William J. Donovan, former head of OSS. He is a member of the New York State and U. S. Supreme Court bars.

In 1949 Mr. Colby accepted his first U. S. Government position as an attorney for the National Labor Relations Board in Washington. In 1951 he joined the staff of the American Embassy in Stockholm and from 1953 to 1958 served in the American Embassy in Rome, Italy.

Mr. Colby became First Secretary of the American Embassy in Saigon in 1959, leaving in 1962 for an assignment as Chief of the Far East Division of the Central Intelligence Agency in Washington, D. C.

In March 1968 Mr. Colby joined the Agency for International Development and was posted to Saigon to assume the post of Assistant Chief of Staff and in November 1968 of Deputy to the Commander of MACV for the CORDS program of support to the Government of Vietnam's pacification campaign, with the personal rank of Ambassador. He was reassigned to the Department of State on 30 June 1971.

On 10 January 1972 Mr. Colby was appointed Executive Director-Comptroller of the Central Intelligence Agency.



